IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (original) An apparatus for distributing content over a network, comprising:
a distribution means interfaced to said network for distributing content onto said network, and at least one playback means interfaced to said network for receiving said distributed content,

wherein said distribution means:

determines the existence of permission to make copies of said content;

registers said at least one playback means to trace said content distributed to said at least one playback means;

authenticates said at least one playback means;

determines if said at least one playback means has permission to access said content;

requests an initiation of secure communications; and

transfers said content from said distribution means to said at least one playback means; and

wherein said at least one playback means:

authenticates said distribution means;

instructs said distribution means to begin transferring said content; and

stores said distributed content transferred from said distribution means.

2. (original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein:
said at least one playback means includes storage means for storing said distributed content.

3. (original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein:

said at least one playback means provides identification to said distribution means to authenticate said at least one playback means.

4. (original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein:

said distribution means provides identification to said at least one playback means to authenticate said distribution means.

5. (original) A method for distributing multimedia content over a network, the method comprising:

requesting a transfer of said content;

determining the existence of permission to make copies of said content;

providing playback means identification from a playback means to a distribution means;

requesting said distribution means to authenticate said playback means;

requesting distribution means identification from said distribution means, said distribution means identification being requested by said playback means;

registering said playback means to trace said content distributed to said playback means, said step of registering being performed by said distribution means;

authenticating said playback means;

determining if said playback means has permission to access said content;

providing said distribution means identification to said playback means;

requesting an initiation of secure communications;

authenticating said distribution means;

instructing said distribution means to begin transferring said content; and

transferring said content from said distribution means to said playback means.

6. (original) The method of claim 5 wherein:

said content is transferred from said distribution means to said playback means.

7. (original) The method of claim 5 wherein:
said distribution means is a personal versatile recorder.

8. (original) The method of claim 5 wherein:
said playback means is a device that is compatible with said network.

9. (original) The method of claim 5 wherein:
said content is at least one copyrighted work.

10. (original) The method of claim 5 wherein:
said content is encrypted by said distribution means.

11. (original) The method of claim 5 wherein:
said connection is a link using a communications protocol.

12. (original) The method of claim 5 wherein:
said distribution means identification is a certificate

13. (original) The method of claim 5 wherein:
said playback means identification is a certificate.

14. (original) The method of claim 5 wherein:
said local area network is a wireless network.

15. (original) The method of claim 5 wherein:
said step of determining the existence of permission for said playback means to access said content is performed by said distribution means.

16. (original) The method of claim 5 wherein an embedded self-destruction feature is contained within said content, said method further comprising the steps of:

determining whether a self-destruction feature is to be activated, wherein upon activation of said self-destruction feature,

a) said playback means identification is reported to a system operator, and

b) said content is erased from said distribution means.

17. (withdrawn) A method for distributing multimedia content over a network, the method comprising:

interfacing a playback means owned by a user to a distribution means, said distribution means is located at a location;

requesting a transfer of content from said distribution means to said playback means;

reporting a playback identifier to a system operator, wherein said system operator checks said playback identifier against a revocation list.

18. (withdrawn) The method of claim 17 wherein when said playback identifier is not on said revocation list and has not been previously associated with any other distribution means, said method further comprising the steps of:

registering said playback identifier;

associating said playback identifier with said distribution means; and

sending an acknowledgement from said system operator to said distribution means indicating the association of said distribution means with said playback means.

19. (withdrawn) The method of claim 17 wherein when said playback identifier is on said revocation list, said method further comprising the steps of:

sending a negative acknowledgement from said system operator to said distribution means, said negative acknowledgement indicating a denial of the association of said distribution means with said playback means, said distribution means terminating the transfer request.

20. (withdrawn) The method of claim 17 wherein when said playback identifier is associated with a distribution means other than said distribution means, said method further comprising the steps of:

sending a negative acknowledgement from said system operator to said distribution means, said negative acknowledgement indicating a denial of the association of said distribution means with said playback means, said distribution means terminating the transfer request.

21. (withdrawn) The method of claim 17 wherein:

said playback identifier is an identifier for said playback means.

22. (withdrawn) The method of claim 17 wherein:

said playback identifier is an X.509 certificate.

23. (withdrawn) The method of claim 17 wherein:

said step of reporting further comprises using a standard protocol.

24. (withdrawn) The method of claim 17 wherein:

said playback means is one of at least one device.

25. (withdrawn) The method of claim 17 wherein:

said distribution means is set-top terminal.

26. (withdrawn) The method of revenue collection comprising:

selecting at least one option offered by a system operator, said at least one option is one of an access option and a copy option;

granting to a distribution means a right to perform said at least one option by said system operator;

executing said at least one option;

tracking the execution of said at least one option;

reporting said at least one option to said system operator for additional billing.

27. (currently amended) A system for distributing content over a network, comprising:

a distribution device interfaced to said network for distributing content ~~onto said network~~, and

at least one playback device for playing or producing said content for a human user, said at least one playback device being interfaced to said network for receiving said content,

wherein said distribution device determines existence of permission to make copies of said content and then encrypts said content for transmission to said at least one playback device to prevent unauthorized use or copying of said content.

28. (previously presented) The system of claim 27, wherein said content is encrypted using private/public key encryption.

29. (previously presented) The system of claim 27, wherein said content is encrypted using digital certificates.

30. (previously presented) The system of claim 27, wherein said distribution device comprises a Personal Video Recorder.

31. (previously presented) The system of claim 27, wherein said distribution device registers said at least one playback device to trace content distributed to said at least one playback device.

32. (previously presented) The system of claim 27, wherein said content is transferred from said distribution device to said playback device using a Secure Socket Layer (SSL) connection.

33. (currently amended) A method for distributing content over a network, comprising:

determining existence of permission to make copies of content available from a distribution device that is in communication with at least one playback device; and,

if said permission exists, encrypting said content for secure transmission to said at least one playback device so as to prevent authorized use or copying of said content.

34. (previously presented) The method of claim 33, wherein said content is encrypted using private/public key encryption.

35. (previously presented) The method of claim 33, wherein said content is encrypted using digital certificates.

36. (previously presented) The method of claim 33, wherein said distribution device comprises a Personal Video Recorder.

37. (previously presented) The method of claim 33, further comprising registering said at least one playback device with said distribution device to trace content distributed to said at least one playback device.

38. (previously presented) The method of claim 33, wherein said content is transferred from said distribution device to said playback device using a Secure Socket Layer (SSL) connection.

39. (new) A system for distributing content:

a distribution device configured for connection to a first network for receiving content via said first network;

at least one playback device for playing or producing said content for a human user;

a second network connecting said distribution device and said at least one playback device.

wherein said distribution device determines existence of permission to make copies of said content and then encrypts said content for transmission to said at least one playback device to prevent unauthorized use or copying of said content.

40. (new) The system of claim 39, wherein said distribution device comprises a set-top terminal and said first network comprises a cable network.

41. (new) The system of claim 39, wherein said playback device comprises a device that both stores and reproduces said content.

42. (new) The system of claim 39, wherein said content is encrypted using private/public key encryption.

43. (new) The system of claim 39, wherein said content is encrypted using digital certificates.

44. (new) The system of claim 39, wherein a key for decrypting said content is transferred from said distribution device to said playback device prior to transmission of said content.

45. (new) The system of claim 39, wherein said distribution device registers said at least one playback device to trace content distributed to said at least one playback device.